
May 20, 2003

WEST VIRGINIA BULLETIN NO. WV 300-3-5

SUBJECT: LTP-FY-2003 EQIP Timeline

Purpose: To provide a timeline of actions needed to carry out the FY 2003 EQIP Program.

Expiration Date: This bulletin expires September 30, 2003

An advance copy of the EQIP Final Rules was made available to us on Friday, May 16, and copy forwarded to you for your information.

Attached for your use is a FY-2003 EQIP Timeline, which shows the dates by which we need to complete specific EQIP actions, in order to sign contracts and obligate the EWIP funds by the end of FY-2003.

We are all under an extremely tight schedule in implementing EQIP this year. Your attention to meeting the attached deadlines will be critical. Please provide copies of the attached FY-2003 EQIP Timelines to all appropriate staff members in each office.

If you have any question or needed additional information, please contact Jim Piper at (304) 284-7543.

**LILLIAN V. WOODS
State Conservationist**

Attachment

Dist: ASTC (FO's), All Field Office

**cc: Herb Andrick, FOCS/GIS Specialist, Morgantown
Truman Wolfe, Ex. Director, WVCA, Charleston, WV
Joe Gumm, Pres., WVACD, Elkins, WV
Jim McClelland, Pres., WVRC&D Assoc., Huntington, WV**

2003 EQIP TIMELINE

May 16, 2003 Advance copy of the Final EQIP Rule available and provided to NRCS employees. The EQIP Final Rule is expected to be published in the Federal Register very soon. The EQIP Manual is expected by May 23.

May 21, 22 Appeals Training

May 23 EQIP Sub Committee to meet and prepare recommendations for the State Technical Committee and State Technical Committee.

May 29 State Technical Committee meeting to provide recommendations to the State Conservationist.

June 2 State Conservationist provides guidance to FO's regarding EQIP implementation and provides initial EQIP allocation for the Local Work Group.

June 2 – 6 Training to be provided to FO staff.

June 13 LWG's meet and finalize Ranking Criteria, Practice List and Cost Share Rates. DC's to send information in electronic format to Jim Piper with a cc to Herb Andrick

June 20 Each Local Work Group's Ranking Criteria, Practice List and cost share rates to be put on NRCS Web site. DC's can start ranking existing applications.

June 20 NRCS and Local Work Group members announce availability of EQIP information and set end of ranking period (two weeks after information is on the web). Conduct Public Outreach.

July 7 End of Ranking Period

Aug. 4 DC's complete ranking of applications.

Aug. 6 DC's will select applications for contract development, based on ranking points and the advice of the Local Working Group. The "Lead DC" in the LWG will e-mail an electronic list of the ranked applications, showing the funded and unfunded applications, dollars tentatively committed, and the dollars remaining, to the ASTC(FO) with a copy to the ASTC(Operations). Do not skip over a higher ranked application to fund a lower ranked application. A summary will also be provided of selected applicants and dollars by county, to permit NRCS to notify FSA to make initial allocations to the FSA county offices.

Aug. 6 DC notifies the applicants selected for contract development

Sept. 5 EQIP Plan of Operations and Contract support documents to be prepared for contract approval. DC's will promptly notify the ASTC (FO) and ASTC(Operations) in writing of any problems with applicant cancellations. Additional applicants will be selected for contract development according to the ranking list. Do not skip over a higher ranked application to fund a lower ranked application. ***(Need to address how to allocate remaining dollars in a LWG.)**

Sept. 8 The "Lead DC" in the LWG area will e-mail a final copy of the list of the ranked applications and those developed into contracts, to the ASTC (FO)'s, with a copy to Jim Piper, ASTC (Operations). The list will include any applicants who cancelled and those who were not funded. A summary showing the individual contracts developed in each county and their dollar amounts will also be prepared.

Sept. 10 NRCS will notify FSA of the final dollar amount of the contracts in each county, so that FSA can make any needed adjustments in the county final allocations.

Sept. 12 FSA will adjust the county final allocations.

Sept. 8 - 19 The NRCS CCC Representatives will sign contracts. The local DC and the NRCS CCC Representative signing the contracts will confirm with the local FSA office that the required dollar amount has been allocated before signing the contracts. If the necessary dollars have not been allocated to the FSA Office, the CCC Representative will contact Jim Piper, ASTC (Operations) at the NRCS State Office.

Sept. 29 FSA County Offices to have contracts entered into System 36.

Oct. 3 NRCS to notify applicants not selected for funding that their application has been deferred due to inadequate funds, and of their choices for possible future consideration.